

From Servitude to Sonship

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Jesus Christ is formally appointed as the Son of God upon His resurrection. We maintain that while the Word was the agent of creation, Christ's earthly ministry was defined by His role as the suffering Servant of the LORD, a position of total subordination and obedience. True sonship is presented not as a biological status but as a legal inheritance and a functional appointment granted after a period of proven faithfulness. This divine pattern serves as a template for believers, who are currently children and servants but are predestined to become joint-heirs with Christ. The Holy Spirit leads us away from the bondage of the law and into a mature responsibility, where we are empowered to live out a new life in anticipation of our future glorification.

The creation of the universe is entirely rooted in the Word of God.

This concept stands in direct contrast to evolutionary theory, which teaches that something was brought forth out of nothing; instead, God made everything not out of nothing, but out of His Word. Through the Word, life itself was established, and without it, no life would exist at all. While water is often considered the starting point of life and serves as a biblical picture of the Word of God, it is ultimately the Word with which all life truly begins.

The Word serves as the outward expression of God. Just as humans express their inner being through spoken words, God reveals Himself and makes His intentions known to His creation through His Word. God formed creation by His breath, and He uses that same breath to speak to humanity. By definition, everything God does is accomplished through His Word, and the concepts of Word, life, and light are synonymous.

Furthermore, the concept of the Word being "made flesh" indicates that the things God announced and promised through His Word—such as the coming of the Messiah and the dawning of the New Covenant—have materialized and been fulfilled. Ultimately, everything God accomplishes is done through His Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as both serve as the true expression of God's very being.

John 1:1-4

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

In these few verses the whole background to the incarnation of the Word is summed up. The universe was made by the Word, and nothing was made without that Word — a clear reference to Genesis 1. Life is therefore in that Word, and without this Word there would have been no life at all.

It is clear that this is an utterly different truth from what the theory of evolution teaches — namely that something was brought forth out of nothing. Something that does not exist cannot bring forth anything. Evolutionary theory is therefore utter nonsense.

God has made everything. Not out of nothing, but out of His Word.

The Word is that in which someone reveals himself. Human beings, too, express themselves in and through their words (see James 3, the whole chapter). A man is led by

his tongue. From childhood onwards he expresses himself that way. Later he learns to do this with his hands as well, but the word remains the true expression of a person's being.

God expresses Himself outwardly. He makes Himself known. People naturally like to reason this away and say, "We know nothing of God." In the same way the Bible is the most reasoned-away Book of all. It is also the most purchased book, yet the least read. And still people cannot get rid of it, for "the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Peter 1:25).

That Word is about the One who has spoken, from Genesis 1 onwards. And that He has spoken is perfectly logical, for as Creator of heaven and earth He naturally makes Himself known to His creation: why He has done so, what He intends to do with it, and so on.

Sir Robert Anderson wrote in his book *The Silence of God*, published in 1897, that the remarkable thing is not that God has spoken, but that in this present time He is silent. God made this creation by His breath, and by that same breath He has spoken to us. Can we still find anything of that? I believe we can: we have the Bible, the only book that claims of itself to be the Word of God.

Word, life, and light are synonyms. "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (Ephesians 5:13). The Word makes manifest, and everything God does, He does through His Word, by definition.

He has spoken from the beginning, not only from Ezra onwards. The current scholarly view is that the oldest books of the Bible were written during the Babylonian captivity. Texts from different sources (source P, source E, and source J) were supposedly pushed together and the Bible mended into shape. But Genesis was written in the days of Genesis. God has indeed spoken from the beginning (by which is not meant that He spoke about the beginning, but that He spoke from the beginning). It is only a pity that man has never wanted to listen.

John 1:5

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

"Comprehended" means to grasp or seize.

They would not receive it. The serpent already told Eve in the garden that when God spoke to her He meant something else. God's Word has been twisted and denied from the very beginning. But if there is a God who has spoken, then you cannot escape Him. People naturally resist this fiercely and try to get out of it by promoting themselves to declare they are god. Man must be served, and when people go in search of God they look for Him inside themselves. On that search everything revolves around feelings and experience, and by those standards they judge those who honour the God of the Bible. God expects humility from us. He expects us to submit ourselves to the One who created us. He has given us the Scriptures, and "they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). That is why we should study those Scriptures. When we submit ourselves to them, He gives us peace — peace in a hard world. That peace then produces genuine experience and emotion.

God complains, even through these words in John 1. He has made the world and spoken to man in many ways, but man would not and will not have Him. That is why God has simply stopped speaking. It is precisely our responsibility to keep and maintain the Word of God instead of setting it aside.

God spoke by the prophets (Hebrews 1:1). Later He will speak again, but then in wrath, to bring judgment upon Israel and upon this world. Then He will establish His throne in Jerusalem and reign here on this old earth for at least a thousand years. But of course, all that is reasoned away. People naturally do not want the Lord to return and establish His power on earth. A mighty Lord is a totally different Figure from the one they have made of Him. They prefer a small, helpless child in a manger, or a Father Christmas who meets all their earthly wishes. But we have a Lord who has overcome the world and who will one day appear as King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14 and 19:16). He is exalted to the highest place (Philippians 2:9). People think far too little of Him and have invented someone else, but that is not the Christ of the Scriptures. Yes, “he took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:7-8), and “though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Hebrews 5:8). He remained faithful throughout His whole career, despised the shame, and endured the cross, because He believed that after this suffering He would be glorified by His Father (Hebrews 12:2). He trusted blindly in that, though it weighed heavily upon Him. In spite of everything the Lord remained faithful to His Father, who therefore highly exalted Him. In that position we would not ask anything of Him; rather, He asks of us: “Occupy till I come.” He is not here for the moment. After speaking from the beginning for four thousand years, He has hidden Himself and withdrawn into heaven. Until He returns we should occupy ourselves in the meantime. Not merely wait, but actively live our new life.

John 1:6-7

“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.”

The Lord did exactly the same, and so did the apostles. They did not preach a new doctrine but testified from the Scriptures that the Messiah would come and that the time had arrived. It was right on the threshold of the seventieth week of Daniel. In practice that is the time of the restoration of the throne of David.

John 3:11

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.”

How did they know? From the Word of God, of course. The Jews had apparently lost their Bible, and they were pointed back to it — not from the Talmud, but from the Bible itself. That was not taken kindly. It went badly with John, just as it did with the Lord Jesus.

John 1:8-12

“He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

This means the believer would receive new life. That is, of course, the new birth. It is not a new doctrine; it is simply there in the Old Testament.

John 1:13

“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

They would yet receive life — not of blood (Hebrew dam), but of God. That was promised to Old Testament believers, but they have not yet obtained it (Hebrews 11:39). They will obtain it. Now, however, everyone who comes to faith immediately receives eternal life. That is possible because we have come to faith after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the First, and before Him no one could simply receive new life. That is why Old Testament believers still wait for that eternal life. They will receive it at the last day.

We are children of God and do not become that only later. We may yet become sons of God, for at the birth of a child development does not stop. That child is to grow up, preferably to become heir of the Father — whether written with a capital or a small letter.

After the days of John the Baptist the words of God are fulfilled. God speaks about the future. The past we can know; it has been handed down to us. For today we have, for example, the newspaper and television.

If God has something to say to us, it would be desirable that He tells us where things are heading. Prophecy is strictly speaking not merely speaking about the future, but also about what has long since happened. Prophecy is the speaking of God. He generally speaks about the future, although people precisely refuse to believe that. For four thousand years He had already spoken about the coming of the Messiah. That coming He had promised, and in the days of John the Baptist He began the fulfilment of that promise and everything connected with it. That is also the essence of the Old Covenant: the New Covenant is announced in it.

In verse 12 it speaks about His Name — His reputation, the One who has spoken.

The Emmaus disciples were foolish and slow of heart. That is why they missed the Lord. If you do not accept and believe everything, you pass Him by. There is an English expression that sums up how many people think about the second coming of Christ: “until Kingdom come” — meaning never.

But He has spoken and said the Messiah would come, and so He came and comes. He has brought life and immortality to light (2 Timothy 1:10). Since then that life is available to everyone who believes. God has given the Holy Spirit of promise to Jesus of Nazareth, and so He rose from the dead, from among the dead. That life He now pours out (Acts 2:33). There is really no difference between life and the Spirit. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the new birth. If you do not have that Spirit, you do not belong to Him. Some say that if you are born again you must still receive the Spirit, but that would be saying the same thing twice.

One would become a child of God, be brought forth — not of blood, but of God (John 3:5, 8). That is to be born again of water and Spirit — spiritual water. Not of the natural amniotic fluid of the mother, but of the Word of God. Birth water is therefore a picture of the Word of God. The whole process of human reproduction is, by the way, a picture of the new birth.

One would therefore yet be born, but then of God. Water and Spirit form a hendiadys. The second noun functions as a strong adjective: spiritual water. With water all life begins; that is true in a certain sense, but of course all life begins with the Word.

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What was promised? The Messiah — and He has come; or the Holy Spirit has been poured out; or the New Covenant has dawned; or the Seed of David, of Abraham, has appeared — the Man after God’s image and likeness.

We now live under the New Covenant. We no longer live under shadows or in the ignorance of the Old Covenant, but under the full Light of the New Covenant (see also 2 Corinthians 5:15-17).

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Water = the Word of God. That water had to be poured into six stone vessels. That is about man, who is a hollow vessel. Those vessels, like people, have certain qualities and properties, but they were to be filled with water. That water becomes the wine of the New Covenant. Where we let ourselves be filled with the Word of God, there we are changed into wine. His Word is poured into our hearts and gives us new life. Or, as Peter would say: “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Peter 1:23).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ represents His official appointment to sonship and the birthright of the firstborn.

During His earthly walk, He was in a serving function—the suffering Servant of the LORD—and did not yet possess eternal life or His status as “THE Son of God”. The very purpose of God’s incarnation was precisely so that He might be able to die. It was only upon His resurrection from among the dead that He was appointed as the Son of God with power and became the “Firstborn of all creation”.

Christ’s resurrection was the true manifestation of the Messiah and His glory. The source material argues that the Messiah did not truly appear in the manger in Bethlehem, but rather in His resurrection. During His earthly life, He was not the full revelation of God’s glory; He only became that, as well as the High Priest, after He rose. In His resurrection, He was given “life in Himself,” a divine abundance of life that He did not possess during His earthly ministry.

Furthermore, the resurrection is the direct source of eternal life and the new birth for believers today. Because Jesus brought life and immortality to light through conquering

death, He now pours out the Holy Spirit, which is the essence of the new birth. Believers today can immediately receive eternal life because they come to faith after the resurrection of Christ, whereas Old Testament believers could not simply receive new life and must wait until the last day.

Finally, the resurrection is the absolute foundation for justification. Christ was delivered for our offenses, but He was "raised again for our justification". Without the resurrection, Jesus would not be the Messiah, and the Christian faith would be entirely without ground. Through baptism, believers are identified and united with Christ in both His death and His resurrection, allowing them to become new creatures who share in His identity and are made alive together with Him. Just as the first Adam was created in a garden, the true "second Adam" emerged in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea when He rose from the dead.

Jesus of Nazareth was therefore not the revelation of the glory of God. He only became that after His resurrection. In His earthly walk He could not be the Messiah, for then He would already have had to possess eternal life. The same applies to His High Priesthood.

Was He then mortal? I think so — He did die! The very purpose of God's incarnation was precisely that He might be able to die.

"We beheld his glory." Peter says in 2 Peter 1:16-18 that this happened on the mount of glory. Of His glory only glimpses were seen on occasion, but the disciples were absolutely forbidden to speak about it until the Son of Man should have risen from the dead (see Mark 9:9). They knew about the resurrection of the dead at the last day, but resurrection from the dead means "from among the dead" — before the last day, and with the leaving behind of the remaining dead.

Resurrection from the dead implies appointment to the birthright. He is the Firstborn of all creation (Colossians 1:15), but they were not allowed to speak about that then, because He was not yet that and would only become so at His resurrection.

"Only begotten" means Firstborn and concerns the birthright.

Bechor = firstborn, blessed. Just like Baruch. The firstborn is the one who inherits and represents the family. That does not by definition have to be the oldest child.

The Messiah has appeared — not in a manger, but in His resurrection. That Messiah has been beheld (see also 1 Corinthians 15:5-8). He was seen, not among the Jews, but among the Gentiles, in Galilee. There was also the miraculous catch of fish — a picture of God's work in this present time.

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The New Covenant is marked by a transition from the shadow of the law to the full light of grace.

While the Old Covenant was mediated by Moses and was defined by the law, the New Covenant brings "true grace" and truth in its highest form through Jesus Christ. Because the promised Messiah has appeared and poured out the Holy Spirit, believers no longer have to live in the ignorance or shadows of the Old Covenant.

The source text uses the miracle at the wedding in Cana to beautifully illustrate this New Covenant life. Human beings are compared to hollow stone vessels; when they allow themselves to be filled with water—which symbolizes the Word of God—that water is miraculously changed into the "wine of the New Covenant," pouring new life into their hearts.

Living Out of Grace Instead of the Law Under the New Covenant, believers are positioned in grace and are expected to "live out of it, not out of the law". To emphasize how believers often fail to utilize this grace, the text shares an analogy of an emigrant sailing to Australia who survived the whole trip on a suitcase of dry apples and nuts because he never realized his ticket was "all-inclusive". Believers who fail to understand their position in grace are living like this man, unnecessarily biting on dry crusts when a feast is available to them. As noted in our previous discussion on sonship, transitioning away from the strict tutors of the law and being led by the Spirit is what allows a believer to mature from a "child" into an adult "son".

Grace Made Perfect in Weakness Furthermore, New Covenant grace is entirely contrary to human self-sufficiency. If a believer desires to actively serve the Lord, they must first learn that they cannot achieve this in their own strength and must completely depend on His grace. Believers must embrace humility and brokenness because God's grace is "made perfect in weakness".

The Apostle Paul is a prime example of this; despite his tremendous zeal, the Lord had to break him down and show him that his own strength was useless, telling him, "My grace is sufficient for thee". Ultimately, God uses this grace to draw "the despised, the ignoble" sinners straight out of the mud and exalt them to sit at His right hand, thereby powerfully demonstrating what His New Covenant grace can accomplish.

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Was He then mortal? I think so — He did die! The very purpose of God's incarnation was precisely that He might be able to die.

"We beheld his glory." Peter says in 2 Peter 1:16-18 that this happened on the mount of glory. Of His glory only glimpses were seen on occasion, but the disciples were absolutely forbidden to speak about it until the Son of Man should have risen from the dead (see Mark 9:9). They knew about the resurrection of the dead at the last day, but resurrection from the dead means "from among the dead" — before the last day, and with the leaving behind of the remaining dead.

Resurrection from the dead implies appointment to the birthright. He is the Firstborn of all creation (Colossians 1:15), but they were not allowed to speak about that then, because He was not yet that and would only become so at His resurrection.

"Only begotten" means Firstborn and concerns the birthright.

Bechor = firstborn, blessed. Just like Baruch. The firstborn is the one who inherits and represents the family. That does not by definition have to be the oldest child.

The Messiah has appeared — not in a manger, but in His resurrection. That Messiah has been beheld (see also 1 Corinthians 15:5-8). He was seen, not among the Jews, but among the Gentiles, in Galilee. There was also the miraculous catch of fish — a picture of God's work in this present time.

John 1:15

"John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me."

John 1:16

"And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

What is in Him, from that we have received an abundance of grace. The riches of His grace, wherein He has abounded (Ephesians 1:7-8).

John 1:17

"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Moses = the law = the Old Covenant.

Moses as mediator of the Old Covenant was a type of the Mediator of the New Covenant (Hebrews 3:1-6). When he was to deliver Israel, they would not have him and he fled to Midian. Although he could not and was not allowed to be there because of government-imposed rules, he still came, but they would not have him. They would not have the Lord Jesus either and He too withdrew Himself. Think also of Jacob who had to flee from his brother.

Moses tends a flock of sheep in a foreign land (that is us), but eventually he must in a second instance still go to Egypt to deliver his people (His second coming).

All those figures from the Old Testament were in their lives a type of the One who was to come.

Grace and truth = true grace, grace in its highest form.

John 1:18

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”

How so no one? Did not Moses? No, all of whom it is said that they saw God did not see God Himself, but an appearance of Him. What appeared of Him was known under the name Jehovah, whom we now know as the Son of God.

The Son stands in relation to the Father. The son is expected to be the expression of the father. The expression of something is always female in relation to what is expressed.

The female is thereby subject to the male. The Son is therefore subject to the Father.

See John 5, the second part. The Son is by definition subordinate to the Father. God cannot be seen, for He is the invisible God. What one sees are the back parts of God.

Those are the outermost parts, the expressed image of God. In the Old Testament that was Jehovah and in the New Testament that is the Lord Jesus Christ (see Hebrews 1; 3). In Old Testament time He was not the Christ, but since His resurrection He has received a name above every name, just as Jehovah had in the Old Testament.

They therefore saw the expression of God's being: Jehovah — Christ.

He is also the fulfilment of Genesis 1:26, where it says, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” He is the second Adam. And when we one day see God, then we see no one else than the Man Jesus of Nazareth, but then exalted to the highest measure.

1 Timothy 6:14-16

“That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”

That will happen at the time He has determined.

Children

John 1:12

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

This verse is often used for evangelistic purposes. That is a little unjustified, because we do not receive the right to become children of God, for we become that immediately at the moment we come to faith.

1 John 3:1

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”

We should be called children of God. That refers to the past and went about the future. One would become it.

“And we are it also.” This sentence is admittedly not in the Textus Receptus from which the KJV was translated, but in other texts it is. However, whether it is there or not does not matter so much, for in the next verse it is also there.

1 John 3:2

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall

be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Now = in the meantime, after everything that went before. Now has become the present time. But it does not stop at being children of God, for we shall yet become more than that.

"Appear" = in this verse "be manifested." It has not yet appeared, but has already been made known. We would namely become sons, heirs.

Stronger still, we shall be like Him (see also Revelation 1:6).

These letters are written to those children of God, with the purpose that these children would grow up to adulthood.

We have been saved in hope, not in the hope that we shall become children of God, but in the hope that we shall one day receive the inheritance. Life, both the natural and the eternal, however, begins with being a child.

What is a child? Father Cats already said: "Children are hindrances."

In the biblical framework, there is a fundamental distinction between a "child" and a "son."

A child is considered unaccountable, acts like a minor under the authority of tutors, and is essentially viewed as the property of the parents, differing nothing from a servant. In contrast, a "son" is an adult heir who takes personal responsibility and makes his own decisions.

The Hebrew concept of a "son" (ben) is primarily about inheritance and succession, not merely biological reproduction. The word ben derives from the root word banah, which means "to build". A son is the one who builds the family name, steps into the shoes of the father, and carries the father's work forward in time. Biblical examples of this non-biological succession include Elisha being the "son" of Elijah, the smiths being the sons of Tubal-cain, and royal successors like Shealtiel inheriting the throne of Jeconiah without being his direct biological descendant.

Appointment to the Birthright Because sonship is about succession, a father must choose which child is most suitable to become the heir and represent the family. The father naturally chooses the one who most resembles him and will carry out the family "business" exactly as he would. As a result, the firstborn—the one who receives the birthright and a double portion of the inheritance—is not always the oldest biological child. We see this throughout Scripture, as the inheritance was passed to younger sons like Solomon and Joseph, while biological firstborns who proved unfaithful or rebellious, such as Esau and Reuben, lost their birthright.

Subordination and Identification A true son stands in a unique relationship with his father. He is completely identified with the father and acts as the outward expression of the father's invisible nature. However, the son remains subordinate to the father; the father is the "giver" who initiates the son into his work, and the son is the "receiver" who faithfully executes it.

Christ and the Believer's Inheritance This concept of sonship and inheritance reaches its pinnacle in Jesus Christ and is extended to believers:

- **Christ's Appointment:** During His earthly ministry, Jesus functioned as the suffering Servant of the LORD, learning obedience and proving His faithfulness. He was not officially appointed as "THE Son of God" and Heir of all things until

He conquered death; His resurrection was the very moment He was begotten as the Firstborn and received the birthright.

- The Believer's Journey to Sonship: Just like Jesus, believers begin their journey by immediately becoming children of God upon believing, but they are predestined to grow up and be officially appointed as adult "sons" and joint-heirs. To receive this inheritance, believers must transition from the "childhood" of following strict laws to the "adulthood" of being led by the Holy Spirit. This requires running the race with patience, taking personal responsibility, and faithfully serving the Lord. Ultimately, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, this full adoption and reception of the inheritance will only be realized at the bodily resurrection.

Below is a list of characteristics of children:

A child is not accountable. That already says a great deal. If someone is accountable, then he is therefore not a child.

A child cannot act independently. The parents are responsible for their children, because children cannot yet bear responsibility. The child is counted as belonging to the parents. It is identified with the parents. Children are the property of their parents. A child is a caterpillar, not a butterfly. Actually a child is a larva. It must yet become a human being. It must first pupate. The child then isolates itself, withdraws itself and sets itself against the parents. And then suddenly there is the butterfly.

In upbringing it makes little sense to keep children strictly and lead them to adulthood that way. That happens of itself.

Some say that upbringing is totally superfluous, others say exactly the opposite. The truth will probably lie somewhere in the middle. In any case the parents are responsible. A child learns playfully, just as is the case with animals. A child therefore learns as play, for fun, without knowing what it is for.

Children would rather learn than eat; they have no interest in food, because they want to learn. They would rather go exploring.

A baby can swim.

Children are interested in all kinds of things.

Children are musical. That is why you must also begin early, for music is like language. Mozart was a child prodigy, but in fact all children are child prodigies. They can learn. Adults have much more difficulty with that.

A child can learn a language, down to the finest details. Adults do this laboriously and never fully master a foreign language. At the moment a child is actually no longer able to learn a language, it must go to school to learn a language.

School is like a child-processing factory.

School turns a learning-hungry child into a mark-chaser. It is no longer about the subject matter, but about what mark it produces.

School gives answers to questions that do not exist.

One no longer distinguishes a child from an adult human being, but children have other capacities than adults.

A child is not a vessel that must be filled, but a sponge that fills itself.

What is decisive in the upbringing of a child is not the imposed rules, but the so-called role models, examples. That is usually the example of the parents, but they only follow

that later when they themselves are adults. In puberty a child needs examples besides the parents, because it is then inclined to set itself against the parents.

In the Bible the child is the property of the parents. They are also responsible for them. It is even so strong that if the child does not please them, they would put it to death. That seems strange and absolutely not fitting in our culture, but what does a life actually count for in our culture? How many wars have there not been in the past? And now, it is murder and manslaughter everywhere.

However, we have far too high an opinion of ourselves. That has to do with the fact that we have abolished God and put ourselves in His place. Man considers himself the image-bearer of God and must therefore be kept alive at all costs. We assess ourselves far too highly, but our life is temporary. It means nothing. It lasts a while and that is it. People reproduce and have children. Yes, I may perhaps not say it, but then you get a child of whom you think afterwards: "If only he had never been born." It is not about giving an opinion, but why all those laws that regulate life? Abortion, euthanasia, and so on. Those matters are the responsibility of every individual human being.

Everything is nowadays regulated by the government. We have gradually become the property of the government. They determine everything: education, further education, choice of profession... but the parents are responsible for their children. All expressions in the Bible with regard to reproduction are not limited to birth, but to the child becoming adult.

"Winning," for example, refers to the whole process of begetting a son, an heir. A son is not a child, but in any case an adult and accountable.

Yalad

Genesis 3:16

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

Bringing forth children = not only the being born of a baby, but up to adulthood. It says "benim" = sons. "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth sons." The Dutch word "baren" comes from the Hebrew "bara," but that word is never translated "to bear," but "to create," in the sense of "to bring into being."

"Bear" here is the translation of "yalad" (10-30-4) = to bring forth, to bear, to win (see also Genesis 4:18).

Yalad = child, lad = boy, lad.

The English word "to litter" is derived from it.

To litter or litter = to give birth, to bring forth, to bear, to bring young into the world, to litter, to strew, rubbish, waste, or to make a mess. In all cases it is about that which is brought forth or is brought forth.

Little, luttel, lutje, loetje = small, subordinate.

Yalad occurs more than 600 times in the Bible.

Youth: na'ar

Another Hebrew word for son = na'ar.

Genesis 37:2

"These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report."

Son is the translation of “ben.” Joseph is therefore the son, the heir, for that is the meaning of “ben.” Further on in this verse he is called “a youth.” That is the translation of na’ar. “Son” here is an adult person, but the problem is that the application is stretched in the word usage. Joseph was only 17, a youth, but already by the word “son” it is said that he will be the heir. He was destined for that.

Genesis 37:3

“Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours.”

He therefore receives a coat of many colours. Joseph becomes the successor, the builder of the family, but he is still a na’ar, a youth.

According to Samson Hirsch, a German rabbi from the 19th century, na’ar means:

to shake off, to throw away;

to roar, to produce sound;

to isolate;

to be youthful.

For what does youth do? Shake everything off, make noise, and so on. It is the shaking off of childish things — teenagers, in other words. A boy, but active. The word implies serviceability, servitude.

A youth is therefore a servant here.

Na’ar = near. When you feel near (unwell), you begin to shout and shake things off.

Na’ar is also the root word for “new.”

In Greek — neáros = new, fresh. It is still new, but also not yet fully finished. It is like building a new racing car. It then goes onto the circuit for a shakedown and drives laps until the car is run in. The teething troubles still have to be ironed out.

Sons

Next we have the concept of “son.”

Son = adult heir. He will receive the inheritance.

Son = ben (Hebrew).

Ben comes from banah (2-50-5) = to build or builder.

Builder also in the sense of building the family name. The son represents the family. The son stands in the shoes of his father, or of the one from whom he has received the inheritance.

The concept of “son” has in principle nothing to do with reproduction.

Tubal-cain is the father of all smiths. All smiths are therefore sons of Tubal-cain. He brought them forth, not by reproduction, but by instruction.

Elijah is the father of Elisha, not biologically, but in succession.

David says to Saul, “My father, my father”; Saul says to David, “My son, my beloved.”

They both knew who Saul’s successor would be.

The sons of the prophets were men who sat at the feet of the prophets.

Father and son therefore have in principle nothing to do with reproduction, but with inheritance rights. Of course it can have to do with reproduction, but that is not the basic meaning of the term.

The son is the successor, the heir, the builder of the one who went before. It is about expansion in time.

Man descends from Adam, and Adam is called the son of God. The natural man is also considered a child of God, but that is on a low level.

Believers are children of God, just like the angels.

The fact that the Lord Jesus was born of Mary does not mean that He was thereby immediately the Son of God; at most a son. Only in His resurrection did He become THE Son of God.

To build, or possibly to begin. You begin something.

Genesis 49:22

“Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall.”

Branch = ben. Son, therefore, but of course little sons do not run over the wall. That is why it is translated “branches.”

A man is compared to a tree. Branches grow on it and in that way the tree is built. Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh were all heirs and successors of their forefathers.

Jacob also knew exactly how it was (see Genesis 48). Banah = to build; eben = stone.

A stone in the Bible is in principle always a building stone. You build with a stone, on a stone, in a stone. It is by definition a building stone because the word eben is derived from banah.

We are built together as living stones into a temple (Ephesians 2:19-22).

At death we erect a stone. It ought to stand upright, as a sign of resurrection.

Zion = a monument including an erected sign (?). “Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps” (Jeremiah 31:21). Why do megaliths stand all over the world and who placed them there?

An erected stone in the Bible is a type of the Messiah, the erected Ben. All those erected stones should remind us of Him.

Jacob slept in Luz (a detour) on a stone and dreamed. When he awoke he set that stone upright and anointed it. That is a type of the anointed Christ.

Ab = father = 1-2

Ben = son = 2-50

Eben = stone = 1-2-50 The father gives to the son. Those two concepts together speak of building.

The father is the giver, the son the receiver.

Inheritance Succession

Before the son is appointed, he must first prove his suitability.

The Father gives it to whom He will. He seeks out the most suitable. That therefore does not necessarily have to be the biological son. Think also of Saul and David.

David had a whole series of sons and Solomon was certainly not the oldest of the lot.

With him it eventually went wrong too and the kingship passed to Jeroboam, from the tribe of Ephraim. Of course it cannot remain like that, for that does not accord with the promises, but Jeroboam was nevertheless called the son of Solomon.

Jeconiah was written childless (Jeremiah 22:28-30) and the kingship passed to his uncle, who was thereby nevertheless called the son of Jeconiah.

Shealtiel was not at all the biological son of Jeconiah, but of Neri (Luke 3:27. The genealogy in Luke follows the biological descent of the Lord Jesus). In Matthew 1:12 he (Shealtiel = Salathiel) is called the son of Jeconiah. (In the genealogy of Matthew it is not about biological descent, but about inheritance succession). Shealtiel is the heir to the throne. He came from another branch of the tribe of David. Not from Solomon, but from

Nathan. The Lord Jesus therefore also. He is the son of Solomon (heir), but does not descend from him.

There is therefore both reproduction and inheritance right, but these concepts are not synonymous.

The New Testament opens with a listing of the heirs to the throne. The Bible considers the continuing generations as one identity. In our time you only still find that in royal houses. It is of the greatest importance to know who our children actually are. For us that is perhaps no longer so important, but for God it is.

You can be the son because you will later receive the inheritance, and you can be the son because you have already received the inheritance.

These concepts naturally stand on the highest level in connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the Son of Abraham and of David, but He is also the Son of God. Who He is is determined by whose shoes He stands in.

The law also provided regulations concerning the birthright.

Deuteronomy 21:15-17

“If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated: Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn: But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.”

One receives the birthright and receives a double portion.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21

“If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.”

If someone curses his father or mother, then he must be stoned.

“Honour thy father and thy mother” means that children should support their parents.

Honour = to honour = to give an honorarium.

The parents can ask for a second opinion from the elders of the city.

Elders = those who have the power.

Justice is spoken in the gate. The gate concerns the position of dominion. If you can no longer close the gate, there is nothing left to govern. Everyone can then go in and out, so the city becomes undefendable.

By stoning such a disobedient son, the family line is protected and maintained. Is that not rather crude? Yes, quite so, but it does illustrate how much the child is considered the property of his parents. It is not even about punishment, for if all was well the parents had already punished the son, but about the fact that someone (in this case this son) is not worthy to live.

Jeremiah 22:28-30

“Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no

pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.”

Jeconiah was the last generation from the house of David on the throne in Jerusalem.

2 Kings 24:15-17

“And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king’s mother, and the king’s wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. ... And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father’s brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.”

Zedekiah was the last king, but did not belong to the same generation; he was the uncle of Jeconiah.

1 Chronicles 3:15-17

“And the sons of Josiah were, the firstborn Johanan, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. And the sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son. ... And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, Shealtiel his son ...”

Now it suddenly says “children.” Yet in the original text it says “benim” = sons. The sentence naturally becomes a bit strange if it reads: “The sons of Jehoiakim were: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son,” but it is about heirs.

Jeconiah came to the throne after Jehoiakim and after him Zedekiah. But Zedekiah was a son of Josiah (see verse 15). This therefore has nothing to do with descent, but with inheritance right.

1 Chronicles 3:17

“And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, Shealtiel his son ...”

Assir is not the name of a son of Jeconiah, but means “the captive.” This Jeconiah was taken captive. His son (his successor) was Shealtiel. He became the heir to the throne, a descendant of Nathan.

The inheritance passed to another branch of the family.

In Matthew Shealtiel (Salathiel) is the son (heir) of Jeconiah who descends from Solomon, and in Luke he is the son (descendant) of Neri, who descends from Nathan. Both Solomon and Nathan are sons of David.

This means that the Lord, through the line of inheritance successors to the throne, descends from Solomon (as shown in Matthew 1) and through the biological line descends from Nathan (as shown in Luke 3). The Son Subordinate to and Identified with the Father

The father is expected not to have only one son, but to be blessed with many sons. But the father chooses one. His choice naturally goes to the son who most resembles him, who would do it just as he himself would.

John 5:16-17

“And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”

As if to say: We are the same.

John 5:18

“Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken

the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.”

According to Jewish interpretation father and son are equal. That is also so, for the Son stands in the shoes of the Father.

John 5:19

“Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.”

Father and Son are not equal in value, as the creeds of most churches state. The Son stands under the Father and is therefore subordinate to Him.

John 5:20

“For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.”

The Father initiates the Son into the things the Father does. Logical, for the Son must take over the “business.”

When the Father will show Him greater works than these, it implies that the Son will later also do those greater works. That is after His official appointment as Son and therefore after His resurrection.

John 5:21

“For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.”

That is what the Lord does in our days (see for example Acts 2:33 and Ephesians 2:5-6).

John 5:22

“For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”

The Son would not only stand in the shoes of His Father, but would also sit on the throne of His Father (see Revelation 4 and 5). He is subordinate to the Father, for He has received everything from the Father.

John 5:23

“That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.”

Father and Son do not stand by themselves, but are identified with each other. Also: “David my servant shall be king over them” (Ezekiel 37:24). The Lord is here identified with David, according to the name of the family, of the tribal father.

John 5:24

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

He was sent by the Father. At the moment this was spoken it was not yet true, but when it was written down it already was. Historically the Gospels are Old Testament, but while they were being written down everything had already been realised.

“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13). It is not even the Lord Jesus who says that, but John. They are indeed statements of the Lord Jesus, but still premature.

Before Isaac was born it was already settled that he would be the heir of Abraham. He was therefore already the heir of Abraham before his birth. And with Jacob and Esau:

“the elder shall serve the younger” (Genesis 25:23). That still took some time, but beforehand Jacob was already called the heir.

2 Samuel 7:12-14

“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son.”

Even before His birth the Lord Jesus is called the Son of David and the Son of God, although He was not yet the Son of God at all then. He only became that at His resurrection from the dead.

In the same way we are children of God and firstfruits of a new creation. That is why we are heirs and predestined to sonship. That term is used beforehand: we are it, but we are still on the way to the inheritance.

We are identified with Christ. We are in Him, we share in Him and we share in His calling. There is only one way that leads to sonship: “In sorrow thou shalt bring forth sons.”

A great deal can still go wrong along the way; the Father can pass him by, or do away with him (Er, the firstborn of Judah, and Onan, his second son, were killed by the Lord, because they were evil in the eyes of the LORD. See Genesis 38:6-10). With Jacob it was not Reuben who became the firstborn, but Joseph. Reuben did things that did not please his father and so the birthright was taken from him (Genesis 49:3-4).

Hebrews 12:16-17

“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”

Esau stood beside it. You can be destined to be a son, but that does not mean you will also be appointed as son. For that you must be faithful to the Lord. He brings us up, so that we can say, “Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6).

Even the Lord Jesus could have lost His birthright. He owes His present position to His obedience as Servant of the Lord. He was chastened, smitten, and learned obedience by the things which He suffered (Hebrews 5:8). He had to walk a path in order to arrive where He is now. Along the way the Lord once considered giving up. But yes, for this purpose He had come into this world and so He faithfully fulfilled His calling.

The Messiah would be Son of David and Son of God. To become that He had to walk the way of humiliation. That is why sonship is quite naar (unpleasant). You do have to be able to bear what you are destined for on the basis of descent. He had to live His life for that God who had also begotten Him.

That is why we too should run with patience the race that is set before us. He expects something from us. Because we are predestined, that determines our lives today. Our origin determines who we are and that also determines our future. We do not have to discover our identity, for we have it on the basis of our origin and calling. That is why we forget those things which are behind and reach forth unto those things which are before. If we only keep measure and know our limitations, then the Lord will see to it that we get there. That does not happen without blows or resistance. We should know that we live in a subordinate position. We are not our own, for He has purchased us and even at a high price (1 Corinthians 6:20).

We are His servants and His soldiers, on the way to kingship. The way there goes downward, in humility before Him. Without Him we are nothing, but because He loves

us He wants to make something of us, through rebirth, in the hope that He will one day be able to say to us, just as to the Lord Jesus: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

The Son is the expressed Image of the Father

The Father is represented by the Son. The Son is the expressed Image of the Father.

Since His resurrection the Lord Jesus Christ is the same as the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Both are the expression of the being of God and of the Father. The appearance of Jehovah in the Old Testament must therefore not only be seen as a theophany, but also as a Christophany.

In Christianity people regard Christ as the Son of God, but the Jews say, "Our God has no Son. We do not find that in our Bible, in our Tanakh." But it is most certainly there in the Old Testament: "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee" (Psalm 2:7). In the "old knowledge" it is known that God has a male side and a female side: the hard, righteous, unrelenting, male side and the loving, merciful, long-suffering female side. The female is expected to be the outside of the male. The core is the male and the husk the female.

Also in language you have masculine and feminine nouns. Everything that has content, that can contain something, is feminine; everything that goes into it is masculine. That is why "world" has from of old also been a feminine word.

The Germans sometimes lose their way quite badly, for the sun is feminine in German and the moon masculine. The sun is surely masculine (the giver) and the moon feminine (the receiver). In the same way the Father is also masculine, for He is the Giver. The Son therefore stands feminine in relation to the Father, because He is the Receiver.

The feminine of God is that which is visible of Him. In the Old Testament that is Jehovah, or the back parts, and in the New Testament that is Christ, the expressed Image of God's being.

The people of Israel is often presented in the Old Testament as son. That people had the birthright and would stand at the head of the nations or Gentiles. In a certain sense Israel was a runaway son who would later return. In the meantime the Lord still thought of that son (see the parable of the prodigal son, Luke 15:11-32). The two sons are the two houses of Israel, whereby the prodigal son is a picture of the ten tribes. Israel is here therefore presented as masculine.

Oholah and Oholibah likewise represent the two houses of Israel: two madams (Ezekiel 23). Here Israel is suddenly feminine.

Masculine and feminine are relative concepts. Masculine in relation to what? In relation to God Israel is feminine, but in relation to the nations Israel is masculine.

The Lord Jesus is also sometimes presented as feminine. The red heifer in Numbers 19 is a female animal, but a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Feminine, because it is a picture of the Lord Jesus in His serving function.

The lifted-up serpent is also feminine in Hebrew. That serpent represents the Lord in His priestly function. But towards humanity the Lord Jesus Christ is masculine.

God is the Invisible and makes use of His expressed Image. As the woman is the glory of the man, so the Son is the glory of the Father.

The appointment to Son is the giving of glory. What God was "expected" to do, happens through the Son, the next generation. He is the outside of the One who is the Father: Jehovah and Christ therefore.

The being of man cannot be grasped and expresses itself in the body. Also the inside of that body is considered as the outside.

John 5 looks forward to that.

John 5:26

“For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;”

We as creatures do have life, but not in ourselves. That life has been injected into us. We use it for a while and at a certain moment it is finished. Just like fuel in a car. Life does not remain; at a certain moment it runs out.

But God has life in Himself. He can also distribute from that, for He has life in abundance. The Father has given that abundant life to the Son. Not in Bethlehem, but in His resurrection. There He received life in Himself. In Acts 2:33 that is called the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. That text is pure evangelism and is completely the same as John 5:26. The Lord received that life when it was said to Him: “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”

Everything God does, He does through His Word, through the Lord Jesus Christ. Both are the expression of God’s being.

He expresses Himself through the feminine outside. Through the Son therefore, who by definition is subordinate to the Father. Besides the Son there is no one, but that is so because the Son is subordinate to the Father.

The Servant of the LORD

All things are subjected to Him, but that was not so in His earthly walk. People are only fond of that little Child in the manger. Then they can do with Him what they want. But if He really was God manifest in the flesh, then you really do not trifle with such a Child. He was here in a serving function, as Servant. He too felt naar (unpleasant). He had to carry out work that Another had assigned to Him.

Galatians 4:1-2

“Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.”

Children are expected to be staff, in the sense of subordinate to the parents.

Christ is the Son of God and carries out divine commissions, but that is no proof of His deity. He did miracles, but that too proves nothing. It only proves that God is with Him, says Nicodemus in John 3:2. The Lord Jesus is described as a slave when it concerns His earthly career. He came to serve, not to be served (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45). That position is often described in the Old Testament. Well, the position of the One who still had to become the Messiah is described, namely the suffering Servant of the LORD.

Philippians 2:6-8

“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

In that position He was the suffering Servant of the LORD.

The role of the Suffering Servant

It is a multifaceted biblical concept that primarily describes Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, but it also prophetically applies to the nation of Israel and the Church. Christ's Earthly Ministry of Service During His earthly walk, Jesus did not appear in full divine glory but came in a serving, subordinate function to fulfill the specific tasks assigned by His Father. Drawing on Philippians 2, the text notes that Christ took on the "form of a servant" and humbled Himself to the point of obedience unto death on the cross. The prophet Isaiah extensively describes this Suffering Servant as someone who was oppressed, afflicted, and led like a dumb sheep to the slaughter to bear our weaknesses. It was precisely through this path of humiliation and by faithfully fulfilling His calling as a servant that Christ earned His high exaltation and was officially appointed to full sonship at His resurrection.

- The Dual Prophetic Application to Israel While Christians correctly identify Jesus as the ultimate Suffering Servant, the prophecies in Isaiah (such as Isaiah 41 and 42) also explicitly name the nation of Israel—or Jacob—as God's chosen servant. The source text emphasizes that biblical prophecies frequently have multiple, layered applications. Israel was chosen to be God's missionary people, tasked with preserving His Word and serving as a "light to the Gentiles". Ultimately, Jesus Christ holds the primary title of the Servant because He acts as the Head of Israel and is the "Believer par excellence" who faithfully carried out the Word of God where the broader nation fell short.
- The Calling of the Church and Believers Because the Church is considered the believing remnant of Israel and the body of Christ, the calling of the Suffering Servant extends to believers today. The Apostle Paul even directly applied the Isaiah prophecy of being a "light of the Gentiles" to himself and his own ministry.
- As followers of Christ, believers are considered the property of the Lord and are called to live a life of active service. Just as Christ had to walk a path of service and humiliation before being exalted, believers are told they must "suffer with Him" in order to be glorified with Him. In this context, "suffering" is described not merely as enduring pain, but as running the race with patience, passion, and complete dedication to the Lord's work. Fulfilling this servant role is the necessary prerequisite for believers to grow out of spiritual childhood and be officially appointed to their full, adult inheritance as "sons"

But who does the prophet Isaiah actually have in mind when he speaks about the Servant of the LORD? The Jewish people say that they are. God simply wants the Jewish people to suffer like this. No one knows why, but the Almighty has so determined. But of course it is about the Lord Jesus. He had a serving task here on earth and still had a great deal to learn for the exercise of that task. His Father gave Him that commission. He had to go by way of Golgotha and along that way God has also highly exalted Him. The Church is described as the reward for His service. And when Christ returns, then He comes with His reward. Not our reward, but the reward for His labour. The labourer is worthy of his hire. As Servant He was obedient to the task that had been laid upon Him. We too are called to sonship. That does bring conditions with it. We must submit ourselves to them. We are His children, but also His property. The question therefore is not whether we believe, but whether we are the property of the Lord; whether we have come to surrender. We do not need Him for our earthly life. The Lord is not a help for day

and night, not a butler. Such a view is idolatrous: how can you manipulate the spirits to set them to your hand.

No, we should submit ourselves to Him and then He will give us what we need to serve Him. For the rest we must find our own way in life. Remember that His eye is upon us. He wants sons and therefore we must learn to take our responsibilities in life, so that we may be found suitable for His service.

In Isaiah you find, spread over several chapters, prophecies about the Servant of the LORD. The discussion usually goes about who that servant is, while it is much more about what that servant actually does.

Isaiah 42, for example, is about that Servant of the LORD. Servant with a capital letter. In the New Testament that term is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. He has taken our weaknesses upon Himself (Isaiah 53:4-5).

Isaiah 53:7

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”

We know those statements as statements about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here Someone is spoken of in humiliation and oppression. That is where we get the term from: the suffering Servant of the LORD. He was yalad, brought forth, and na’ar. He still had all kinds of things to do and to learn.

The question who the Servant of the LORD is, however, is not so easily answered. The Jews say that they are, the Christians say that it is the Lord Jesus, but the prophetic Word usually has several applications. That is why the choice of words is also very precise.

When God said, “Let us make Adam” (Genesis 1:26), that did indeed refer to Adam, but in the highest instance it really referred to the last Adam. And whether the first Adam was in the image and likeness of God...? With Seth you already read that he was in the likeness of Adam, after his image (Genesis 5:3).

1 Corinthians 15:49

“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

Deuteronomy 17:18-20

“And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.”

“Copy” = duplicate = transcript.

You have the original law, which was kept in the temple, but there must be a copy for the king. (In the days of Josiah they found the book of the law in the temple and hastened with it to the king. See 2 Kings 22 from verse 3 onwards). These words from Deuteronomy 17 are not only applicable to the king, but to all Israel, for Israel is a royal and priestly people (Exodus 19:6). The Messianic Kingdom will also be an Israelite kingdom.

Where we are made or are kings and priests (1 Peter 2:9), there we too should have a copy, so that we may learn to fear the Lord all the days of our life.

The Servant of the LORD is a royal people; he/it is a messenger and speaks the words of God.

Isaiah 44:26-28

“That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”

Cyrus would only appear much later, and in the days of Cyrus these things actually happened. He is a type of Christ, for there is only one Redeemer: the Messiah.

Isaiah 42:1-4

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.”

The most obvious is that this Servant here is Israel, to whom the words of God were entrusted: thus Israel in its priestly function. And we know from the many prophecies concerning Israel that it will indeed bring the Gospel to the Gentiles. But that only happens after it has itself come to faith.

In Revelation 7, 144,000 servants of God are sealed. That they are servants can only mean that they will proclaim the Gospel. That is after the end of the 70th week of Daniel.

Israel was chosen as the people of God. They are a royal and priestly people. That last at least means that they would preserve the Word of God (Romans 3:2). And just as the priests were expected to live scattered among the tribes of Israel, so they will later probably live scattered among the nations.

Isaiah 42:16

“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”

Isaiah 42:19

“Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD’s servant?”

Here it is again about Israel: the people that is blind and not able to give leadership. The Lord was surely not blind? No, unless it was in His first years, for it says that He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52). Although the expression “Servant of the LORD” here applies to Israel, in the New Testament it suddenly applies to the Lord Jesus.

The Servant of the LORD:

Isaiah 42 and 49

Isaiah 42:1

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”

Who was chosen? Israel, Jacob! Yet this statement is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. See among others Matthew 3:17 and 17:5.

Isaiah 49:1

“Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.”

The Gospel would one day reach the lands afar. That is certainly the case in this present time. In Jerusalem it is all religion and it is officially forbidden there to preach the Gospel.

Salvation would go to the ends of the earth. The people of Israel went out of the land, into the dispersion, and ended up at the ends of the earth. In the future that will happen again. The land of Israel will then be laid waste, with all the Palestinians in it. Then it will appear that elsewhere in the world there are believers who will gather in Jerusalem.

In the year 70 the same thing happened. Jerusalem was destroyed, but in the meantime the Gospel had long since found its home in England, in the lands of the sea. For there is always a remnant that preserves the Word in their hearts.

God has revealed truth in the world that lies in darkness. We should incline our ear to Him and He will give us the sure mercies of David. He was a shepherd and God took him from following the sheep, with the promise that he would rule over the whole earth (see Isaiah 55:1-4; 2 Samuel 7). And the Scripture is not written by men, but by God Himself. You can build on that.

With the Servant of the LORD it is actually always about the believing remnant. In these chapters that remnant is called Israel, even though it is then a worm.

Back to verse 1. “From the bowels of my mother” = Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, but also Egypt, which is considered the mother of Israel. In a certain sense the mother died at the birth. When once the new creation comes forth, then the mother, the old creation, dies.

The birth of the Lord Jesus is announced to His mother and father. From the mother’s womb it was known what role He would fulfil. His career was determined beforehand with regard to what God’s will was. How He would walk that career was not known beforehand. If it had been determined beforehand (election), then it would be fate and there would be no responsibility at all. For God does lead.

God uses the Servant of the LORD for His purpose. That is why He is expected to be faithful to His calling and to run the race that is set before Him (Hebrews 12).

And when it concerns the life of believers, then God does indeed lead them, but in the Truth. Further, He will make all things work together for good. He has no intention with our daily life and therefore does not determine it either. Everything is coincidence. The Lord says, “Occupy till I come.” You must manage your own life, decide for yourself what you want, and take your own responsibility.

A child carries out assignments, but the son decides for himself and takes responsibility for his life.

In the church people assume that the members of the congregation are a flock of dumb sheep and therefore need a leader. The same is done in The Hague. Leaders? They should be servants; ministers, as the word says.

We should take our own responsibility, so that we are no longer children. We should be taught in the Word of God, so that we are no longer tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

The lifted-up serpent is also feminine in Hebrew. That serpent represents the Lord in His priestly function. But towards humanity the Lord Jesus Christ is masculine.

God is the Invisible One and makes use of His expressed Image. As the woman is the glory of the man, so the Son is the glory of the Father.

The appointment to Son is the giving of glory. What God was “expected” to do happens through the Son, the next generation. He is the outward expression of the One who is the Father: Jehovah in the Old Testament and Christ in the New.

The being of man cannot be grasped and expresses itself in the body. Even the inside of that body is considered as the outside. John 5 looks forward to this truth.

John 5:26

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1 Corinthians 15:49

“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

People always say that Adam changed at the fall. But that seems highly doubtful when you bear the restitution doctrine in mind. Adam was an example, a type, of the One who was to come (Romans 5:14). In this way you find a double application of the same words. It applies to the one, but also to the other.

Prophecies are usually timeless. You find no indication of time in them, nor any sequence of events. When a prophecy says “in that day,” it simply means one day. It does not say exactly when. The most important time indication is found in Daniel 9, although even there there is a gap in the continuity.

The prophets themselves also had difficulty with the “timelessness” of the prophecies they wrote down.

1 Peter 1:10-11

“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”

They searched into what time was being spoken of. They did come to the idea that there would first be suffering and afterwards glory would follow, but the difficulty was that there was a mystery in it. For where does it say that the Lord would rise? It does not really matter what the prophet thought when he wrote something down, for he did not understand it anyway. He was only the secretary. There is but one Author of the Bible, and it turns out that He had several thoughts when He had the things written down. The Jews say that they are the Servant of the LORD; in that they are completely right. From Isaiah 40 onwards it is about the coming of the Messiah. Isaiah is therefore also seen as the evangelist among the prophets.

Isaiah 40:1-3

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’s hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”

That statement applies to John the Baptist, but equally to the Lord Jesus. The first is a type of the Second.

Isaiah 40 is the introduction to the New Covenant.

Isaiah 41:8-9

“But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.”

The seed of Abraham is: Israel (according to verse 9); Christ (according to Galatians 3:16); but also the descendants of the other seven sons of Abraham.

Isaiah 42:1

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”

Who was chosen? Israel, Jacob! Yet this statement is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. See among others Matthew 3:17 and 17:5.

Isaiah 42:19

“Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD’s servant?”

Was the Lord Jesus blind? Literally? Figuratively then? It is about Israel, about the servant, the messenger. The messenger of the good tidings from Isaiah 40. Israel is responsible for that. For to what end was the people of Israel chosen? To preserve the Word of God, to administer it, and so on. Israel is God’s missionary people on earth. Unto them were committed the oracles of God (Romans 3:2). And in the days of the second coming Israel will indeed proclaim that Word to the remaining nations. In the highest instance the Lord Jesus Christ is of course responsible for God’s Word. He is the High Priest of the New Covenant and in that function the highest Responsible One.

Isaiah 45:1

“Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut.”

Cyrus, the Persian, is here also described as a servant. Many of those figures in the Bible are types of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Anointed = Messiah.

Cyrus would bring about deliverance, but if you read the chapter further you must conclude that it is about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Cyrus = shepherd!

In this way the prophecies concerning Antiochus Epiphanes do concern this person, but he is a type of the antichrist. The prophecies were fulfilled, but they will yet be fulfilled in the future and then completely.

You therefore also find that double application of the prophecies in Isaiah. The Servant of the LORD is Israel, but also the Lord Jesus.

The king is the state. He represents the people. He stands at the head of the army. Who is Israel? Who is a Dutchman? In any case the king. If you then establish that the Servant of the LORD is Israel, then the next question is who belongs to Israel. In any case therefore the king. But however large the people may be, it is always only about a believing remnant (Isaiah 1:9; 10:22).

Jesus Christ is the Believer par excellence. If therefore anyone has a right to the term Servant of the LORD, then it is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is Israel, because He stands at the head of Israel and because He was the most faithful to the Word of God.

Isaiah 1–39 deals with the judgments God will bring upon Israel and the remaining nations. How can that be? Because only a remnant is preserved; the rest perishes. The Lord said to Moses that He was going to destroy the people of Israel, but Moses protested, because the Lord had made promises to the people and He therefore could not destroy the people at all (Numbers 14:11–20). But the Lord could just as well have continued with Moses alone, just as He once continued with Noah and his sons alone. Adam is considered the head of the old humanity and Christ the Head of the new humanity. Noah and Moses are therefore types of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The fact that Israel goes through all that misery in the course of history naturally comes because the devil also knows very well how the Lord does His work. Islam turns fiercely

against the Jews and the Jewish state and on the other side against Christianity, because both are the representatives of the tribes of Israel. The Muslims may not know that, but Allah does. But the cause of eternal salvation does not lie in the suffering of the people of Israel, but in the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some things are hidden in Scripture, but that is all the more proof that the Bible is the Word of God. The prophets had no idea what they were speaking about.

Before the king is king, he is the servant, the slave.

He is Obed, abad = to work; actually slave. In English: bondman.

He would do something. Whether that is voluntary or not does not matter. He had to walk that way of service, just like Israel. You do not know what it is to live in glory if you have not first experienced the opposite.

That is why we learn to serve Him; then He will exalt us.

Isaiah 41:8

“But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.”

That Servant of the LORD therefore applies on several levels, but is in particular applied to Israel. This implies that the term is also applied to the Church, for the Church is a church of firstborn ones and the believing remnant of Israel.

Isaiah 41:9

“Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.”

That this is about Israel admits of no doubt.

Isaiah 41:1-4

“Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment. Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? he gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet. Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.”

Jehovah therefore. It is about the God who is unchangeable. He has produced that Word and has begotten that one specific people out of all those women who were barren.

Ephraim is the firstborn and Manasseh now and then steps into his place.

Here in Isaiah it is also still about the fact that the people would disappear into captivity and be destroyed, but also about the history of Israel and the calling of the Church in our time. It is always about the believing remnant and that is now the Church. We are therefore Israel.

These words in Isaiah 41 are therefore about Israel that would go into captivity. In that captivity they would preserve and preach the Word. That has happened in the historical sense, but certainly also in New Testament days through the ten tribes of Israel.

Jacob = Israel = the Servant of the LORD and has a calling to the ends of the earth.

Isaiah 41:14

“Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.”

You do not think here of the mass of the people, but of the believing remnant (Romans 11). In captivity it was precisely the minority that preserved and preached that Word. Nowadays people assume that chapters 40–66 were written by someone other than Isaiah, because they have the definite impression that the people were then in captivity, in the dispersion (chapters 1–39 were written in the days of Hezekiah and afterwards). They then mean the Babylonian captivity. The other (Assyrian) one of course not, for that is simply ignored. But the prophecies are timeless. God as it were moves Himself from one time to another and from there He speaks.

God stands above time. If you deny that prophecies could not have been written in a certain time because they concern a later period, then you take away from God the right to speak about the future and thereby you deny that He exists.

God simply stands above such a point in time and describes it. For Him that is no problem. You cannot subject Him to time; He surveys the things. Sometimes He looks back (flashback), but then He goes on again. Besides Him there is no god. You can know that He is God, because He can foretell the future.

The people of Israel was begotten by God and appointed as servant (yalad and na'ar). The teething troubles still have to be ironed out. Think of the story of the prodigal son. He wanted to be the servant of the father and the father accepted him. All the misery has been shaken off. Israel disappears into captivity and wakes up there. There it reports to the Father. His brother had never been away. He was jealous (picture of the Jewish people).

Isaiah 44:21-23

“Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.”

As if it is called to the prodigal son. The father stood waiting for him.

Jacob = the natural Israel, but he bears the title “Israel” = the believing remnant.

Isaiah 44:24-26

“Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof.”

The word of His servant = the Word of the LORD. The Servant of the LORD seems after all to be a prophet, for he speaks the word of his Master: a messenger therefore.

Messengers = angels = messengers. Here not heavenly messengers, but Israel.

Malach = angel;

Melech = king.

In Hebrew it is the same word. It seems that it has two meanings, but the king is simply the messenger of God. This presupposes that the king has received a message from above.

“By me kings reign” (Proverbs 8:15): that says wisdom, but that wisdom is God, for all the treasures of wisdom are hidden in God (Colossians 2:3).

“Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above” (John 19:11): All the kings of the earth stand under a higher authority and are responsible for maintaining the Word of God.

A king exercises dominion;

A messenger sends a message.

But a messenger also exercises power, for if, for example, the weatherman says that bad weather is coming, then you take your coat with you. He exercises influence. Think also of the power of frontal education and the power of the media. They will just tell you how it is.

But here it is about Israel and about the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the King of kings, but also the Messenger of messengers.

David was one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament, with all those psalms. When he speaks his last words in 2 Samuel 23, he says, “The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue” (2 Samuel 23:2). Not only were his words prophetic, but also his life had a prophetic meaning. He was the great king of Israel, but most certainly also a great prophet. The king is responsible for maintaining and passing on the Word. He is officially also the lawgiver. The law comes strictly speaking from God.

Isaiah 42:16

“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”

Isaiah 42:19

“Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD’s servant?”

Here again it speaks of Israel: the people that is blind and unable to give leadership.

Surely the Lord was not blind? No — except perhaps in His early years, for we read that He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52).

Although the expression “Servant of the LORD” here clearly applies to Israel, in the New Testament it is suddenly applied to the Lord Jesus.

The Servant of the LORD: Isaiah 42 and 49

Isaiah 42:1

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”

Who is chosen? Israel. “My soul” simply means “I.”

This verse has two direct references in Matthew (Matthew 3:17; 17:5). Many more could have been listed.

Matthew 3:16-17

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

The baptism is a picture of death and resurrection. If anyone has risen from the dead, it is the Lord Jesus — hence “straightway.” The heavens were opened for His sake. The invisible Spirit is here made visible in the form of a dove.

The baptism and the transfiguration on the mountain are both pictures of His resurrection and glorification, when He is appointed Son.

In Isaiah 42 the Servant of the LORD may refer to Israel, but in the New Testament references it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. When the same words apply to both, it shows that the Lord travelled the whole world before His death to proclaim the Gospel. And when it concerns the Lord Jesus Christ, the expression is not limited to His person but also applies to “the Christ” — that is, Christ and the Church.

The Servant is therefore indicated in the New Testament as Son. He would become that. But we must also keep Israel (the blind people) in view.

Isaiah 49 runs largely parallel to Isaiah 42. The Servant of the LORD would have a ministry as a light to the nations.

Isaiah 49:1

“Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.”

The Gospel would one day reach the distant lands. That is certainly true in our time. In Jerusalem today it is all religion, and it is officially forbidden to preach the Gospel there. Salvation would go to the ends of the earth. The people of Israel went out of the land into dispersion and ended up at the ends of the earth. In the future this will happen again. The land of Israel will then be laid waste. Then it will appear that elsewhere in the world there are believers who will gather in Jerusalem.

In AD 70 the same thing happened. Jerusalem was destroyed, but in the meantime the Gospel had long since found a home in England and in the lands of the sea. For there is always a remnant that preserves the Word in their hearts.

God has revealed truth in a world that lies in darkness. We should incline our ear to Him, and He will give us the sure mercies of David. David was a shepherd, and God took him from following the sheep with the promise that he would rule over the whole earth (see Isaiah 55:1-4; 2 Samuel 7). The Scripture was not written by men, but by God Himself. You can build your life on that.

With the Servant of the LORD it is always ultimately about the believing remnant. In these chapters that remnant is called Israel, even though it is then described as a worm.

Back to verse 1. “From the bowels of my mother” refers to Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel — but also to Egypt, which is considered the mother of Israel. In a certain sense the mother died at the birth. When the new creation finally comes forth, the mother — the old creation — dies.

The birth of the Lord Jesus was announced to His mother and father. From the mother’s womb it was known what role He would fulfil. His career was predetermined according to God’s will. How He would walk that career was not known beforehand. If everything had been fixed in advance (election as fate), there would have been no room for responsibility at all. God does lead, but He also expects faithfulness.

God uses the Servant of the LORD for His purpose. That is why the Servant is expected to be faithful to His calling and to run the race that is set before Him (Hebrews 12).

When it concerns the life of believers, God does indeed lead them — but in the Truth. Moreover, He works all things together for good. He has no detailed blueprint for our daily lives and therefore does not determine every detail. Much is simply coincidence. The Lord says, “Occupy till I come.” You must manage your own life, decide for yourself what you want, and take your own responsibility.

A child carries out assignments, but the son decides for himself and takes responsibility for his life.

In the church people often assume that the members are a flock of dumb sheep who need a leader. The same attitude exists in government. Leaders? They should be servants — ministers, as the word itself says.

We should take our own responsibility so that we are no longer children. We should be taught in the Word of God so that we are no longer tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

Isaiah 49:2

“And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;”

Sword = power, influence.

Shadow of His hand = protected. They received the Word of God into their keeping and God protects them.

Polished shaft = to give direction, but in essence to teach. To point the way. Someone has to show you.

To make someone a polished shaft = to make someone a good teacher. The Lord gives direction, and later the people of Israel.

Hidden = when the moment comes, that arrow will come out and be used.

Isaiah 49:3

“And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”

Is “He” the people Israel? Yes. Not the Messiah? Of course it is also the Messiah, for whoever has no part in the Messiah does not belong to Israel. The Messiah bears the name of His people. The Lord Jesus Christ has, as the First, the right to bear the name Israel; after Him the believing remnant, and that is now the Church.

In John 17:4-5 the Lord Jesus prays: “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” He is to the glory of God.

Israel was also destined for that, but it turned out rather differently. They blaspheme God. Nowadays God is not at all the God of the Jewish people: Lo-ammi and Lo-ruhamah. They will become God’s people again in the future, but not for the moment. For they do not preserve the words of God as God’s people should.

The Jewish people was once God’s people, is not now, but will be again in the future.

The people had to go out of the land as servant.

Hosea 4:6

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”

It does not say “destroyed” but “dumb.” The people has been silenced.

Why? Because it is without knowledge. If it has no knowledge, it also has nothing to say. Israel was to be a priestly people, but if they reject knowledge, how can they still be a

priestly people? And so it would become Lo-ammi. The son did not want to, and so the Father said, "Then go out of the land!"

What then is that knowledge? The law of God. That is not merely the regulations, but the instructions — how things actually are.

Torah = faithfulness; that which remains. In English: truth.

Truth is truth because it remains. Faithfulness, truth, and faith are the same words.

Isaiah 49:4

"Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God."

This Servant has indeed done what He had to do, but He complains that it has had no effect at all. But then: "The labourer is worthy of his hire." He does receive His reward.

Isaiah 49:5

"And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength."

What then was that work? This Servant had to gather Jacob, Israel. That work does not consist exclusively of saving sinners.

How would Israel be gathered? They would return to the Lord. So if you want to gather Israel, then you preach the Word of God. The Lord has done that, but it has not worked. That work was later continued by the disciples, but the people would not let itself be gathered.

That work was not on the basis of "no cure, no pay," for the Servant of the LORD received His reward.

To be glorified = see John 17. In the New Testament the Church is considered the reward, the inheritance, the people of the Lord Jesus Christ. He received that reward on the ground of His work.

Isaiah 49:6

"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."

That work was to have as its result the bringing back of Israel, but there is yet another aspect to the plan. It was also the intention that the Gospel would be spread throughout the whole world. And although Israel would not let itself be gathered, it must nevertheless be established that the Gospel has gone over the whole world. The residence moved from Jerusalem to Rome, but ultimately of course to Brit-am and the Parthians.

If you seek the Lord, you must not go to Jerusalem, but to the Anglo-Saxons. There the Gospel has found the most entrance. Sooner or later you then come to the real believers. That is at the ends of the earth, at the havens of the sea.

That is the result of the service of the Lord and therefore also of the believing remnant. He has been appointed Son, but still stands in the service of His Father, for He has appointed Him High Priest. Not like the servant Moses, but as the Son. In that function He would be faithful. He preserves the Word and leads us in it, so that we may know Him. That determines our identity and that would lead us in which direction we go, left or right. And if you do not know, then just choose, for then all ways and paths will lead to good.

In the New Testament the Servant of the LORD from Isaiah is therefore applied to the Lord Jesus.

Luke 2:27-32

“And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”

Simeon had seen the Saviour.

The Word-bringer is indicated as the Word, the Light-bringer as the Light.

Verse 32 is a free quotation from Isaiah 42:6 and also from Isaiah 49:6.

Isaiah 42:6

“I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;”

Isaiah 49:6

“And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.”

In both texts it is about the same thing.

Luke 2:33

“And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.”

Joseph is of course mentioned to refer to the Old Testament histories of Joseph, but especially in connection with Isaiah 42 and 49. Salvation went from the Jews to the ten tribes.

Joseph and Mary did not marvel because they heard that the little Child Jesus would be the Messiah, but they marvelled at the order of events as mentioned here in verses 31 and 32.

The Saviour is from Israel, from the Jewish people. And all the tribes of Israel will proclaim the Word throughout the whole world and so all the nations will be blessed. That is how people knew the order of events. But Simeon mentions first the Gentiles and only then Israel. James refers to this reversal in Acts 15:14-17.

Acts 15:13-17

“And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me. Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.”

The Gentiles, the ten tribes, would come to faith first. And when Israel comes to conversion, then the Messiah appears and He establishes His Kingdom. But salvation goes first to the Gentiles, because Israel (the Jewish people) has had its chance but has not taken it.

One day the Jewish people in Jerusalem will officially call on the Name of the Lord and come to conversion; on that day the Lord will set His feet on the Mount of Olives. That is in the future, at the end of the 70th week of Daniel. But now, in our days, the roles are reversed and salvation does not go to the Jews but to the Gentiles. What in Isaiah 42 and 49 is perhaps not clear is made clear here in Luke 2 and Acts 15.

In Acts 13 Barnabas and Paul are on a missionary journey. It was the missionary journey of Barnabas and Paul went with him.

The names of both missionaries are interchanged: Barnabas was actually called Joseph, but is now called Barnabas; Joseph may be seen for a moment, but then he disappears again (God does a work in secret). Paul was formerly called Saul and is now called Paul = little one.

They came to Antioch and were given the opportunity to speak in the synagogue. Paul spoke about the history of Israel, what God had all done and how Israel reacted to it. They therefore spoke to the Jews, for they were after all in the synagogue. The Gentiles, however, got wind of that speech and asked whether they might also be present the next time to hear what Paul had to say.

This had consequences for the attitude of the Jews.

Acts 13:44-46

“And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”

They spoke with boldness. So they spoke about the mystery.

Why was it necessary that the Word of God should first be spoken to the Jews? If it is about nothing else than the personal salvation of every human being, then that was of course not necessary at all. That salvation is after all for everyone who believes. But God had made promises and so the Word of God had first to be preached to the Jews, the own tribe of the Messiah, and then to the remaining tribes of Israel and the Gentiles. Paul therefore also visited, everywhere he came, first the synagogues. As apostle of the Gentiles he proclaimed the Gospel first to the Jews and only afterwards to the Gentiles. But Peter has opened the door in the preaching to the Gentiles (see Acts 15, the first part).

Acts 13:47

“For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.”

Here is explained what is said in Isaiah 42 and 49. Because the Jewish people rejects salvation, it goes to the Gentiles.

Paul applies these verses to himself. “You” = Paul. God has set him to be a light of the Gentiles.

Those chapters in Isaiah therefore certainly also speak about this present time. The Servant of the LORD is here Paul, but as followers of Paul we are that too.

Israel is the chosen people of God. Not to be saved, but to serve God. The people must therefore first come to faith.

We are the chosen people of God and with us, the Church, His Word is preserved. And so that Word must now be preached to the Jews. The Servant of the LORD is in practice the one who takes the responsibility to preserve God's Word.

Matthew 25:45-51

[full passage as in the text]Who is that good and faithful servant? The Jehovah's Witnesses consider themselves as an organisation to be that good and faithful servant.

No answer is given here to the question who that good and faithful servant is, but a call is made to take your responsibility. You could be that servant if you are willing to live out of that responsibility.

Acts 13 and the Resurrection as Appointment to Sonship

Acts 13:26-32

Nothing more stood in His way to becoming the Messiah. He was with the rich man (Joseph) in the grave. In the garden, just like the first Adam. And when God said in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make Adam," the real Adam only appeared in the garden of Joseph.

Acts 13:33

"As it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

"Begotten" = raised = resurrection from the dead = appointment as Son.

These things happened at the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and not at His birth in Bethlehem. All the details surrounding the birth of the Lord Jesus are pictures of His resurrection from the dead.

God raised Him from the dead. Death no longer has dominion over Him and He will never return to corruption. God has raised His Son and appointed Him Son, after He had first been Servant.

Romans 1:1-4

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:"

The Gospel is only Gospel if it was promised beforehand: the expected Gospel, or rather the expected New Covenant.

He became the Son of God at His resurrection.

"Declared" in the original text is horizo = ordained. He was appointed to be the Son of God. That is a function for which one is appointed. The Servant of the LORD is appointed Son, appointed Heir, after proven service.

Spirit of holiness = the Holy Spirit. On the ground of His eternal life He is the Son. This is God's Servant, for He has laid His Spirit upon Him. Compare with Isaiah 42:1, Matthew 3:17, Matthew 12:18, 2 Peter 1:17.

Here the Servant becomes the Son.

We who believe in Him receive eternal life. We serve Him and follow Him. And when we run our race, we too receive a position at the right hand of God. For that we should put off the old man and put on the new man.

Romans 4:25

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

This thought is then developed further. He has indeed taken and borne our infirmities (Isaiah 53).

But that He was delivered for our offences does not yet mean that we are thereby justified. For:

2 Corinthians 5:15

“And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”

If One died for all, then not all are saved, but all have died. All men are therefore dead before God and that is also why He does not regard them. The advantage of that is that He does not impute our sins to us either.

That He lives is for the sake of believers. The Gospel is preached to dead people. That preaching is not that He died for us, but that He lives! And in Him and through Him we also have life.

We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the living and abiding Word of God (1 Peter 1:23).

Ephesians 2:6 says that He has made us alive together with Him (raised together) and has seated us together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. That is a reference to Psalm 110. We have entered into rest and have been seated at God's right hand.

Faith in the resurrection is essential. If He has not been raised, then He is not the Messiah either and we are of all men most miserable (1 Corinthians 15:13-19). Then you have hope, but completely without ground.

He has been raised for our justification.

Romans 5:1-2

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

You only share in Christ through faith.

We stand in grace. That is our position, and we have access to this grace. There was once a man who emigrated to Australia. He had no money with him to buy food, but a suitcase full of apples and nuts. So every day he took an apple and a nut to stay alive during the journey. On the last evening of the voyage there was a big farewell dinner. Everyone was invited. When the man did not go, however, he was asked why not. His answer was that he had no money for that. “But do you not have a ticket? On that it says ‘all inclusive.’” The poor man had never read what was on his ticket and had therefore bitten on a dry crust the whole journey.

We, however, stand in grace and should live out of it, not out of the law. If you want to serve the Lord, then you are in one way or another forced to call upon that grace. Before the Lord uses you, you probably first have to learn a great deal. Also that it cannot come from yourself, but that you are dependent on His grace. We are worthless and the power of God's grace is made perfect in weakness.

We therefore stand in that grace. That brings with it that we do and leave certain things, but that is not the point.

We live from what God gives us and rejoice in the future. In the meantime we take our serving position, with the hope of the glory that awaits us.

Romans 5:5

“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

We are joined to Him and dependent on His care. That is what love is. He does something for us. If the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, then that means He cares for us. We have received the pledge, namely the Holy Spirit. That Spirit brings us to glory.

Romans 8:14

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Not children, but sons. In the original text it says *huios* = sons.

We are considered sons and are on the way to our appointment as sons. Along the way we learn to bear responsibility.

Galatians 5:18

“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

It is either the law, or being led by the Holy Spirit. It is the one or the other. He leads you outside the law to sonship. If you remain under the law, then you also remain a child.

Romans 6:3-6

We are raised with Him and have thereby become new creatures. The old no longer counts, but on the contrary we should live the new life. The question is what that new life will do.

Baptism = to be identified with. To be immersed in Him, to share in Him, to become one with Him, to be planted together with Him (see also 1 Corinthians 10:1-4).

One therefore shares in the identity of Christ and that identity is in high degree determined by what He has done and what He does. That forms Him. He came to earth and ran His race in faithfulness and faith, with the result that He was crucified, with the result that He was raised from the dead. And we have become one with Him. Here it says, “Do you not know that?” We should not serve sin anymore.

Law = the first principles of the world. As a child you are immediately placed under the laws of your parents. You know no better. And that seems to be your upbringing that keeps pursuing you your whole life.

But if you have no law, what must you do then? How do people do who live in the middle of the prairie? Under what laws do they live? Those are not there. They can therefore determine everything themselves. So, why go to church twice on Sunday? There is no church there at all. You then stand in freedom and must make something of it. We do not belong to that world where the first principles of the world apply, for we have been placed outside the camp. There we are left to ourselves. Only our Lord watches over us. The responsibility for our life lies with us and we must learn to handle that on the way home.

The Lord says, “Manage!” Of course you do get some instructions with you, but as a rule it applies that you must just see and determine your own choices. And if you do not know, then just choose an exit. If it turns out to be the wrong one, the road will come to a dead end of itself and you must go all the way back. But you have then at least learned how it should not be done.

Paul spent a large part of his life striving for the law. He was a big shot. He was zealous in the doctrine of his fathers, but was eventually stopped by the Lord. Then he asked the right question: “Who art Thou?” Yes, he did know what the Lord was called, but not Who He was and what He did.

Dwight Moody, an American evangelist from the 19th century, said that the law is like a mirror. You can see your uncleanness in it, but you cannot wash yourself in it. But if you look in the mirror you should not see yourself, but the Lord.

You are a servant of God and have no law. What must you then do with your life? What must you do with your norms and values; where do you get them from? Well, in the Bible it says that the law would not have dominion over us and sin neither. We have died and are free from the law.

We also have no need of spiritual leaders, for the Holy Spirit would lead us. He leads us into all the Truth. That is the work of the High Priest. He makes the Truth known.

John 8:31-32

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

You must first learn to accept that truth, just like children. A characteristic of children is that they believe everything. That changes quickly and then they begin to ask questions: “Is it really true that God has spoken?”

But if you understand the truth, then you are free. The Preacher says that the earth remains standing and that everything just keeps going and that everything that comes has already been and that people try to make straight what is crooked and so on. It goes up and down and to and fro. And after sunshine comes rain. God has made it so, so that man should not set his hope on the future.

Life is like a fair: it costs you a lot of money and you become sick to your stomach. But the Lord says, “Come out of it.”

All things are just as they are and history repeats itself. But as soon as you know this kind of things, then you no longer live in the world. If you have seen a few generations come and go and have seen that the world does not get any better, then you stand beside it. Then you are probably also free and therefore have nothing more to seek here. People who stand like that in life are often weary of life and for them it does not have to go on any longer.

Increase of knowledge is increase of sorrow.

You could also step out and serve the Lord. All that problematic situation in the world is always fashion, delusion of the day. Who still talks nowadays about the hole in the ozone layer, about acid rain? Now it is CO₂ and global warming and we cannot say too much against it, for we should behave ourselves a little decently as Christians.

But further it is just plain nonsense. Let the dead bury their dead. The Lord lets it be known that He will solve it and that He cares for you and me.

He wants to use us for that — not now, but when He wills, in the future. In the meantime we should let ourselves be led by the Spirit.

Romans 8:15

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

The Spirit would bring us there.

“Abba” emphasises the Hebrew concept with regard to inheritance rights.

We call Him Father, not because we are children of His, but because He will lead us to the inheritance.

The Church is a people for His Name. Our calling is that we are kings and priests. That is our position and we should take it to heart.

The final destination determines our life. The world knows nothing about that final destination and therefore just chooses whatever. But man has no goal. Yes, people want a better future, but how is that possible if you have no future?

The point is that when you look back on your life, whether it has been worth it. Have you served the Lord? Have you lived that new life? However our lives may look, we are in any case on the way to His throne and to our sonship.

Law is for children; adults bear their own responsibility. The Spirit teaches us that. Wherever among children of God the law is read, there the working of the Spirit is resisted and underestimated. His Word is surely stronger than our own words.

Spirit of bondage = spirit of slavery.

Romans 8:16

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”

The same Spirit = the Spirit Himself.

Here it speaks about what we officially, de jure, are. As long as we are still flesh and blood we shall not inherit and we are children. But God does consider us as sons. For the greater part of our life we are expected to be adults. We should come to that perfect man, but officially we are still children and should learn how we should behave.

The same applied to the Lord Jesus. However adult He was, He was only appointed Son at His resurrection. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom. We are still subordinate, servants.

Romans 8:17

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Heirs = looking to the future and therefore we are considered heirs. If Christ is Heir, then we are joint-heirs with Him. In so far as we suffer with Him, we shall be glorified with Him.

The way of glory goes through suffering.

In history about six million Christians have had to pay for their lives with death. But suffering need not have such a heavy meaning, for if one suffers with a “long i” (patience), then another takes over the lead. We call that passion.

You do not die of passion, but it can hurt. You are driven by something or someone.

Passion can also give satisfaction, because man is by nature a servant. He must have something to live for. He must have something to serve. The Lord also took upon Himself the form of a Servant. You can serve Him or another. You serve the one Lord or another, but serve you do!

Passion = patience = not mere endurance, but with enthusiasm, with complete dedication. If you commit yourself to something, it often costs effort and pain, but you find your satisfaction in it. The intention is that we should run with patience, with passion, the race that is set before us (Hebrews 12). The Lord went on to the bitter end and He was glorified. The same is expected of us. Not only to be saved, but precisely to run that race. That does not mean that you get to heaven, but that you will be promoted. You will have terrible regret if you do not run that race. Then a dreadful judgment will come upon your work and you will have to manage in eternity without a garment. The works are thrown into the fire and then you can only hope that there is still some gold, silver, and precious stones among them — those good works which God has prepared beforehand.

1 Corinthians 15:50

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”

They do go in, but inherit nothing.

1 Corinthians 15:51-54

This whole chapter is about the bodily resurrection. That must also come, for otherwise we would not inherit.

1 Corinthians 15:58

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Wherever we serve Him, preferably steadfast and unmoveable, there we shall receive the inheritance that God preserves for us in heaven.

To that end we are called. For that we have been born again and must run a race, grow up. Then in the future we shall receive a more or less glorified body.

We have been saved, not by works, but unto good works (Ephesians 2:8-10). That is a way to go in freedom: “Occupy till I come.” Make something of it and at the revelation before the judgment seat of Christ it will become clear what we have made of it.

Back to Romans 8.

We should run our race just like Christ and look unto our “Role Model.” He has finished His course and is seated at the right hand of God.

Romans 8:18

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

“I reckon” = logizomai = I count.

That promised glory is very much worth it.

Romans 8:19

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.”

With uplifted head = eagerly longing.

Children of God = sons of God.

God does nothing with the whole creation. He will do something with it, but only at the manifestation of the sons of God. As long as we are here He therefore does nothing with it, for we are those sons of God, His reward, His council of elders, His people, His Church, His body. Then the complete work of Christ will be shown to the world. And then we shall share in His work, as kings. The glory to be revealed in us will be revealed to the world. That is that glory from verse 18.

Just as the Lord came in His first coming, so He will also appear in His second coming. The angels at His birth in Bethlehem, who sing “Glory to God,” are a picture of the Church. When He appears in His second coming, then the Church will appear with Him in glory.

Christ and the Church are officially hidden for the world. The Lord rose from the dead and disappeared. He appeared only in secret and only to those who were from Galilee. No one needs to be the loser of His hiding, for if anyone seeks Him, he will surely find Him.

The world must wait (see Acts 15) and only in the future will things continue with the world. Soon all countries and nations of importance will again be on the map and after the rapture of the Church things will continue again.

Something must change. The world looks for it with outstretched neck. There must come one world, one kingdom, one currency, one leader, one religion. Not only from

lust for power, but also from idealism. That will have to happen with armed force. With the Lord too. When He establishes His Kingdom on earth, that will certainly not happen without blows or resistance. On the other hand there is of course the preaching of the Gospel. But only after the rapture of the Church is that the time (see Psalm 2: "Ask of me...").

Until now He has left His vengeance/wrath for what it is and is long-suffering over this world. To a certain extent He has still set His glory aside, but a time is coming when that will change.

Romans 8:20-22

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

Everything in the world is meaningless. It often seems like a great deal, but it leads to nothing. Two world wars and still people have learned nothing from them. Everything is subjected to vanity. The world is subjected to God and He does nothing with it. Is that to be held against Him? For where is that promise of the future? It will really come right. The Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

Now He is building the Church. That is why every day given to us is worth serving Him. Then He will care for us. To surrender to that is an act of faith.

Who wants to serve the Lord? That is the essence of the Christian life. We come to Him and receive eternal life. Then we are His property and therefore we should also stand in the service of our Owner.

Even while you work for a living you can serve the Lord, by doing it with passion.

When the Lord calls, for whatever work, then you are there! Or then you ought to be there. He calls, not just one or two, but He calls us all. We are responsible for pursuing the truth. That means that we cherish that truth, make it our own, and preach it to others. In doing so you need not cast pearls before swine.

Improvement of society is utterly un-biblical. We have another responsibility: to point others to the victory that there is in Christ. In the meantime that world waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Romans 8:23

"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

We have become firstfruits, because we are the first since the resurrection of Christ. Groan = to sigh deeply.

We expect the sonship, namely the redemption of our body. We have been saved in hope!

Romans 8:24

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

We stand on the promises of God. We have a tremendous future, which is fixed. Now we must live our own lives ourselves and later we must give account ourselves for that life and we cannot shift it onto another. Even if you can prove that it is someone else's fault.

You must solve it, for it is your responsibility. If something hinders you, then stop it. If you say of yourself that you are no good, that is an excuse not to serve the Lord. But there is no reason not to serve the Lord.

When the Lord calls, then you go. Then your ability is not from yourself, but from God. He draws sinners out of the mud and sets them at His right hand. That is what the grace of God can do (Ephesians 2:6): the despised, the ignoble. In that way it is demonstrated what God's grace can do.

Paul also had his problems. He saw it so enormously as a burden to preach the mystery to the Corinthians that he prayed to God about it three times. But God said, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

The Lord let Paul search for a long time, so that it was clear to him that in his own strength he got nowhere. That is why he also became Paul = little one. (Take me, break me, fill me.) If you are not humble enough of yourself, then you must be broken. Only then are you weak, but powerful, for only then can the Lord do His work. When we are conscious of our dependence on Him, only then can He use us.

You come to Him as a hollow vessel. The Lord fills that vessel and whether you are small or great, full is full. You are expected to know what you can and cannot do; that is maturity. And then to trust in the Lord. He gives us everything that pertains to life and godliness. If you really live from the hand of God, then you can also care for one another. Whatever you distribute, you never come short. The only thing you really possess is wisdom. That you can distribute without losing it.

Amen.